

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please AMEND claims 1, 2, 7, 8, 11, 12, and 14-18, as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A punching device comprising:

a die member having a plurality of die holes formed therein;

a plurality of punch members which are caused to advance into the die holes to punch holes in a sheet member to be punched;

an operating member having cam portions ~~formed along a direction intersecting the direction of advancement of said punch members~~, said operating member being moved along the direction intersecting the direction of advancement of said punch members to cause ~~by a conversion function of said cam portions~~ said punch members to advance into the die holes by said cam portion; and

~~drive means for moving said operating member, and~~

control means for controlling movement of said operating member wherein said control means performs a initializing operation for moving said operating member to a first rest position or to a second rest position before said control means performs a punching operation for punching holes in the sheet while moving said operating member between said first rest position and said second rest position, said drive means,

~~wherein said operating member is movable between a first rest position and a second rest position;~~

and in said ~~control means performs an initializing operation in which~~ said operating member is moved to the first rest position when said operating member is located

nearer the second rest position than the first rest position, and said operating member is moved to the second rest position when said operating member is located nearer the first rest position than the second rest position.

2. (Currently Amended) A punching device according to claim 1, wherein each of said cam portions has a straight groove and a cam groove for advancing said punch members into said die holes ~~performing the conversion function~~, and wherein, when said operating member is moved in one of opposite directions, at least one of said cam grooves of said cam portions acts on one of said punch members to selectively cause the same to advance.

3. (Original) A punching device according to claim 2, wherein one of said cam portions has two cam grooves at its center, and straight grooves formed at opposite ends of each cam groove, and is used to control two of said punch members.

4. (Original) A punching device according to claim 2, wherein one of said cam portions has one cam groove at its center, and straight grooves formed at opposite ends of the cam groove, and is used to control two of said punch members.

5. (Original) A punching device according to claim 2, wherein one of said cam portions has one cam groove at its end, and a straight groove formed at an end of the cam groove, and is used to control one of said punch members.

6. (Original) A punching device according to claim 2, wherein:

one of said cam portions has two cam grooves at its center, and straight grooves formed at opposite ends of each cam groove, and is used to control two of said punch members;

another of said cam portions has one cam groove at its center, and straight grooves formed at opposite ends of the cam groove, and is used to control two of said punch members;

and

a remaining one of said cam portions has one cam groove at its end, and a straight groove formed at an end of the cam groove, and is used to control one of said punch members, two of said punch members and three of said punch members being selectively caused to advance.

7. (Currently Amended) A punching device according to claim 1, wherein:

said operating member can be moved between the first rest position and the second rest position on the basis of a detection operation performed by detection means for detecting the position of said operating member under the control of said control means ~~for controlling said drive means~~; and

~~said operating member performs a punching operation for causing at least one of said punch members to advance into the corresponding die hole when moved from the first rest position to the second rest position or moved from the second rest position to the first rest position.~~

8. (Currently Amended) A punching device according to claim 1, wherein said operating member is movable in a moving area sectioned in order of a first rest area having the first rest position, a first punching area, a second punching area, and a second rest area having the second rest position, ~~on the basis of a detection operation performed by means for detecting the position of said operating member under the control of operation control means for controlling said drive means; and~~

wherein said operation control means performs ~~an~~ the initializing operation for moving in which said operating member is moved to the second rest area when said operating member is located in the first rest area or in the first punching area, and ~~that for moving~~ said operating member is moved to the first rest area when said operating member is located in the second rest area or in the second punching area.

Claims 9 and 10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) A punching device according to claim 1 7, wherein a speed of the movement of said operating member in the initializing operation is lower than that in the punching operation.

12. (Currently Amended) A punching device according to claim 7, wherein said ~~operation~~ control means stops said operating member ~~the operation of said drive means~~ if said ~~position~~ detection means does not detect the movement of said operating member after a

lapse of a predetermined period of time from the time at which said ~~operation~~ control means starts the operation of said operating member.

13. (Original) A punching device according to claim 12, wherein the predetermined period of time in the case of the initializing operation is longer than that in the case of the punching operation.

14. (Currently Amended) A sheet processor comprising a punching device for punching holes in the sheet according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 8 and 11 to 13.~~

15. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus comprising:
image forming means for forming an image on a sheet; and
a punching device for punching holes in the sheet according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 8 and 11 to 13.~~

16. (Currently Amended) A punching device according to claim 1, wherein a third rest position is arranged on an opposite side of the first rest position with respect to the second rest position, and said operating member is movable in the first rest position, second rest position and the third rest position, and wherein said control means performs ~~an~~ the initializing operation in which said operating member is moved to a secondary near rest position in the first, second and third rest positions.

17. (Currently Amended) A punching device according to claim 16,

wherein said operating member is movable in a moving area sectioned in order of a first rest area having the first rest position, a first punching area, a second punching area, a second rest area having the second rest position, a third punching area, a fourth punching area, and a third rest area having a third rest position, ~~on the basis of a detection operation performed by means for detecting the position of said operating member under the control of operation control means for controlling said drive means;~~

wherein said ~~operation control means performs, on the basis of the detection operation of said position detection means, an~~ the initializing operation in which ~~for moving~~ said operating member is moved to the second rest area when said operating member is located in the first rest area or in the first punching area, ~~for moving~~ said operating member is moved to the first rest area when said operating member is located in the second rest area or in the second punching area, ~~for moving~~ said operating member is moved to the third rest area when said operating member is located in the second rest area or in the third punching area, and ~~for moving~~ said operating member is moved to the second rest area when said operating member is located in the third rest area or in the fourth punching area.

18. (Currently Amended) A punching device according to claim 16,

wherein said operating member is movable between said first and third rest positions ~~on the basis of a detection operation performed by means for detecting the position of said operating member under the control of said control means for controlling said drive means;~~

said operating member punches a first number of holes in the member to be punched with the corresponding number of said punch member when said operating member performs a punching operation for causing the corresponding number of said punch members to advance into the corresponding die holes during its movement from the first rest position to the second rest position or its movement from the second rest position to the first rest position; and

said operating member punches a second number of holes in the member to be punched with the corresponding number of said punch members when said operating member performs a punching operation for causing the corresponding number of said punch members to advance into the corresponding die holes during its movement from the second rest position to the third rest position or its movement from the third rest position to the second rest position.

19. (Previously Presented) A punching device according to claim 18, wherein a speed of the movement of said operating member in the initializing operation is lower than that in the punching operation.